

# CLARE CASTLE PIER AND HARBOUR.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 1 December 1882;—for,

COPIES "of MEMORIAL to the Treasury, in July 1881, from Merchants and Traders interested in Clare Castle Harbour, calling Attention to the State of the RIVER FERGUS, and requesting that the Control of the Affairs of the Port may be handed over to a Local Board :

"Of the TREASURY REPLY thereto :

"Of a MEMORIAL of the Chairman of the Ennis Town Commissioners, of August 1881, on the same Subject :

"Of RESOLUTIONS passed by the above Commissioners on the 3rd day of April 1882, as to the Completion of the Works :

"And, of TREASURY REPLY thereto."

Treasury Chambers,  
1 December 1882. }

LEONARD COURTNEY.

## — No. 1. —

MEMORIAL from Merchants and Traders interested in Clare Castle Harbour.

My Lord,

Ennis, 19 July 1881.

I. WE, the undersigned, being deeply interested in the navigation of the River Fergus, beg respectfully to solicit your Lordship's influence in order to bring before the proper authority the neglected state of the river for years past, owing to the apathy of the Board of Public Works in Ireland, upon whom devolves the duty of removing impediments to navigation, and effecting other necessary improvements, including the dredging of the bed of the river from time to time.

II. The revenue, as may be seen by reference to a Return furnished to Parliament, being considerably in excess of the annual expenditure for several years past, we beg to submit that in future such surplus funds ought to be expended in the improvement of the harbour of Clare, as well as the river, and that at present immediate steps be taken to widen and deepen those portions of the river which impede the progress of vessels of large draught of water, and also to dredge and clear away the obstructions wherever such exist, and endanger the safety of vessels, whether lying alongside the quay at Clare or at anchor in the river.

III. That the Board of Public Works being in receipt of the dues on vessels arriving in the River Fergus, we cannot apply to any other body to effect improvements which ought to be carried out at the expense of the surplus revenue of the port.

IV. As evidence of the apathy of the Board of Works, and in order to give your Lordship an idea of the growing importance of the port of Clare, we beg to state that Mr. Carroll, of Ennis, and Messrs. McInerney, of Ennis, and Mr. O'Brien, of Clare, are now owners of vessels of large tonnage, and a vessel of Mr. Carroll's which is now in the river cannot come up to the quay owing to obstructions in bed of river."

V. Such impediments to navigation may be removed without much trouble and expense.

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VI. That

VI. That having regard to the fact that no improvements have been effected in the river or in the harbour since the quay was first built many years ago on a loan since repaid by the port, save and except the new pier which is now being erected, we submit that it would be for the interest of all concerned to have a local board formed here to manage the affairs of the river and port, as is the case at Limerick, which board to be empowered to collect the harbour dues, and to expend the net revenue in useful improvements from time to time.

VII. That Clare being the port of Ennis, and next in importance to that of Limerick, on the Shannon, and with increasing trade, every facility ought to be afforded with a view to meet its growing wants, and in order to afford facilities for developing direct communication with British and foreign ports.

VIII. And as your Lordship on all occasions has taken a warm interest in all questions of practical utility relating to local matters, we trust you will on the present occasion use your influence to make the port of Clare commodious and safe, and thereby induce owners and masters of vessels to send their ships there without fear of damage whilst entering and leaving the river.

To the Right Hon. Lord Inchiquin.

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— No. 2. —

(13,895.)

The Secretary to the Treasury to Lord Inchiquin.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 25 August 1881.

THE Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have received the Memorial signed by yourself and other merchants interested in the navigation of the River Fergus calling attention to the state of the river and of the port of Clare Castle, with a view to the improvement of the facilities for trade.

My Lords have been in communication with the Board of Public Works, Ireland, on the subject of the alleged neglected state of the river, and they are informed by that Board that beyond the maintenance of quays and the keeping clear the portion of the river bed opposite to them, and which are in good repair, and, it is believed, in as good condition now as when completed by the Shannon Commissioners in 1845, they have no jurisdiction or responsibility, nor have they authority to execute works of improvement.

The Board state, however, that their attention has been called within the past year or two to the dangers to which vessels navigating the river are exposed from the rock or shoal (called Roland's Rock) referred to in the Memorial, situated about 5½ miles below Clare Castle Harbour, and, with a view to providing against the danger, they have made propositions both to the Limerick Harbour Commissioners, who have a certain jurisdiction (as regards pilotage) over the Shannon estuary, extending to that of the Fergus, and also to the Irish Lights Board, within whose province, as it appeared to the Board, the duty might be considered to come, to place a beacon on the rock, they (the Board of Works, Ireland) undertaking to ask the consent of the Treasury, in consideration of the local interests involved, to their contributing towards the work one-half the cost, estimated at 40 £. By both Boards, however, the proposition has been rejected, and the rock accordingly remains without any warning of its danger.

As regards the rest of the river course between Clare Castle Pier and the rock in question, the Board of Works are not aware of any part requiring dredging or other improvement, but they are constructing at the former point an additional length of quays, under Treasury authority given in November 1879, at considerable expense, with a view to providing increased trading facilities with improved berthage in deeper water over a soft bottom, the bottom at the old quay on which vessels ground being of hard gravel.

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The complaint of the Memorialists in regard to the neglect of the Commissioners of Public Works will therefore be seen from these facts to be unfounded.

With regard to the desired transference of the control of the pier and harbour to local authority, I am to add that the question of transferring this and other piers, &c., to local bodies is at present under consideration.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *F. Cavendish.*

Mr. John Shaw, Coal Merchant, &c., Ennis,  
under cover to Lord Inchiquin,  
Dromoland, Newmarket-on-Fergus, County Clare.

— No. 3. —

25 August 1881.

The MEMORIAL of the Chairman and Town Commissioners of the Borough of Ennis, County Clare, Ireland,

Respectfully sheweth,

I. THAT the port of Clare Castle, on the River Fergus, which is about two miles distant from Ennis, the county town, is the only place where vessels can load or discharge cargoes for merchants or other residents in the said town and district.

II. That a quay was built in the year 1843 on a loan granted by the Government on the security of the taxpayers of the county, which advance has long since been repaid.

III. That said port is under the control and management of the Board of Public Works, who collect the tolls.

IV. That the annual revenue for said port is considerably in excess of the expenditure, and is increasing.

V. That from Returns presented to Parliament not long ago a sum exceeding 2,000 *l.* was received by the Board of Works in excess of expenditure up to that time.

VI. That owing to representations made some time ago, the Board of Public Works undertook to build a pier near said quay, so as to afford additional accommodation, which pier is now in progress of erection.

VII. That at same time representations were also made of obstructions in the bed of the river, but nothing has been done to remove such.

VIII. That Boland's Rock, and the Bar Rock, being dangerous to vessels navigating the river, ought to be removed, or partially so, in order to widen the channel.

IX. That several sharp angles in the course of the river ought also to be cut away, and the mud at such places, as well as elsewhere in the river, dredged from time to time.

X. That in order to assist shipmasters and others to navigate the river, buoys and beacons be placed where necessary; at present there is not a buoy or a beacon in the river.

XI. That owing to the impediments before named, vessels are in danger of being wrecked or injured, and the character of the port suffers seriously in consequence.

XII. That none of the surplus revenue has been expended by the Board of Works in the improvement of the navigable part of the river.

XIII. That a large increase has taken place in the exports and imports into Clare of late years.

XIV. That the tramway system will within a very short time afford increased facilities for the carriage of goods from Clare Castle to Ennis.

And having regard to the large interests at stake, and the importance of making Clare Castle a central port for the county, we beg to submit that it would conduce to the interest of all concerned were a local harbour board formed for the management of said port in connection with the Board of Public Works, such as similar ports elsewhere, which would have a direct interest in making the port and river accessible at all times without incurring such risks, as vessels are liable to under present circumstances.

We, the Town Commissioners of Ennis, in view of the foregoing facts in connection with the port of Clare Castle, which is the seaport of Ennis, and with a view of forwarding the trade and commercial interests of the town, beg to submit that such trade and interests have been injured materially, and will continue to suffer until the river and port are placed under the control of a properly constituted local harbour board as before suggested.

The Right Hon. Lord Inchiquin.

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— No. 4. —

RESOLUTIONS passed by the Ennis Town Commissioners.

Town Hall, Ennis, 21 April 1882.

At a Meeting of the Ennis Town Commissioners held on the 3rd April instant,—

Proposed by Patrick Considine, Esq., seconded by James Kinnane, Esq., and passed unanimously,

That we, the town commissioners of the borough of Ennis, county of Clare, Ireland, beg respectfully to refer the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury to the Memorial adopted by this Board on the 8th August 1881, and to their reply, respecting the harbour and new pier of Clare Castle.

That no such measure for transferring harbours and piers to local bodies has been introduced to Parliament, and no announcement as yet made that such a Bill would be introduced at all this Session.

That the new pier which was then in progress by the Board of Public Works is not yet completed.

That the workmen who were employed thereof have been discharged.

That the pier is split in several places, and is in a falling state, and which we are informed must be taken down and rebuilt before the pier can be finished or rendered fit for use.

That having regard to the inconvenience arising during its non-completion, and its present insecure state, we beg respectfully to urge their Lordships the necessity of taking immediate steps to complete the works, and also recommending the passing of an Act of Parliament for transferring the management of the said harbour to a local body.

That the town of Ennis will suffer from extra charge for freight, in consequence of the danger of this falling pier, captains of vessels not being inclined to come into this port.

That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Right Honourable Lord Inchiquin, and our borough and county Members, requesting they will give the question their immediate attention and support.

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— No. 5. —

(8102—82.)

The Secretary to the Treasury to Lord Inchiquin.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 18 May 1882.

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury the resolutions of the Ennis Town Commissioners, forwarded by you on the 21st ultimo.

With regard to the works at Clare Castle, I am desirous to acquaint you that my Lords are informed that the masonry of the new pier or wharf has been completed, but that in consequence of a very extensive landslip which occurred behind it during the last winter, and which caused two cracks in the wall, it was not considered prudent to complete the filling till the surrounding earth had settled.\*

It is expected that the work of filling will shortly be resumed. There is no apprehension of the wall falling.

As regards the question of transferring the Lower Shannon piers to local control and management, I am to state that owing to the local difficulties at some of the piers, there seems no prospect of Her Majesty's Government being able to introduce a Bill for this purpose during the present Session.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *Leonard Courtney.*

J. Parsons, Esq.,

Chairman of the Town Commissioners, Ennis,  
(under cover to the Lord Inchiquin,  
Hereford House, Park-street, W.).

GLASS CASTLE FISH AND MARSHES.

COPIES of Minutes to the Treasury, 15 July 1885,  
from Matthews and Threlkeld submitted to Glass  
Castle Fisheries, calling attention to the value of the  
Silver Fishery, and suggesting that if a General of  
the Affairs of the Fishery be located near to a  
Local Board, of the Treasury Department, of a  
Member of the Council of the Royal Society,  
Commissioner of August 1885, on the same subject,  
of the subject raised by the above Commission  
on 2nd of April 1885, as to the Completion of  
the Works and of Fisheries Marine Works.

(Mr. Threlkeld)

Submitted to the House of Commons, 15 July 1885,  
1 December 1885.